

Remarks

For the Information Disclosure:

A supplemental information disclosure statement is being submitted herewith for the Examiner's consideration.

For the Claims:

Applicant submitted claims 1-29. This Office Action rejected claims 1-4, 7-10, 17, 20, and 21, objected to claims 5, 6, 11-16, 18, 19, and 22-25, and allowed claims 26-29. Applicants cancel claims 6, 17-20, amend claims 1, 5, 11, 14, and 16, and retain claims 2-4, 7-10, 12, 13, 15, and 21-29 as originally submitted. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration.

This Office Action rejects claims 1-4, 8, and 17 as being anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious over De Keuster et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,223,556 (hereinafter De Keuster). In addition, this Office Action rejects claims 7 and 20 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over De Keuster in view of Guerra Cisneros et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,395,509 (hereinafter Guerra Cisneros) or Scaringe et al, U.S. Publication No. 2004/0025532 (hereinafter Scaringe). This Office Action further rejects claims 8-10 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over De Keuster in view of Burk, U.S. Patent No. 5,666,791).

Claim 1 is being amended to include all limitations of objected to claim 6. Consequently, claim 6 is being canceled. Each of objected to claims 5, 11, 14, and 16 is being amended to independent form to include all limitations of originally filed

claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants believe that independent claims 1, 5, 11, 14, and 16 are allowable. Originally filed claims 2-4 and 7-10 depend directly or indirectly from amended independent claim 1 and are believed allowable. Similarly, originally filed claims 12 and 13 depend from amended independent claim 11 and are believed allowable, and originally filed claim 15 depends from amended independent claim 14 and is believed allowable. Claims 17-20 are being canceled. As such, the rejection of claims 17 and 20 is moot.

Claim 21 was provisionally rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claim 5 of copending Application No. 10/753,179. The Office Action explains that this is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not yet been patented. A Notice of Allowance has now been issued on the copending Application (10/753,179), and the copending Application will not be abandoned. Consequently, a Terminal Disclaimer is being submitted herewith.

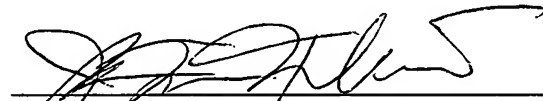
Upon acceptance of the Terminal Disclaimer, claim 21 should now be found allowable as originally filed. Claims 22-25 depend directly or indirectly from claim 21. Consequently, claims 22-25 are also allowable as originally filed.

Accordingly, this Amendment cancels claims 6 and 17-20, and amends claims 1, 5, 11, 14, and 16. Currently amended claims 1, 5, 11, 14, and 16 remain in the application and are believed to be allowable. In addition, claims 2-4, 7-10, 12, 13, 15, and 21-25 remain in the application as originally submitted and are believed to be allowable. Furthermore, previously allowed claims 26-29 remain in the application as originally filed.

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Applicants believe that the foregoing amendments and remarks are fully responsive to the rejections recited in the 3 March 2005 Office Action and that the present application is now in a condition for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Meschkow', is written over a horizontal line.

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